

MOBSA SOFTBALL RULES

2018 SEASON

A. GENERAL RULES

1. Start times will be determined by league officials prior to season.
2. Home team is responsible for lining the field and setting up bases prior to game. Base paths:
 - a) Majors and Minors Divisions: 60 ft between bases.
 - b) Farms Division: 50 ft between bases.
3. Before each game, the home team and visiting team shall share the outfield for warm-ups. Neither team should use the infield for warm-ups.
4. No team or player shall hit soft toss into any part of the fencing around the field.
5. No game can begin unless each team has a manager, coach, or a designated certified adult present.
6. Regular scheduled games for all divisions will be 6 innings. Farms games will have a time limit 1hr 15min. Rookies games will have a time limit of 1hr 30min.
7. A forfeit will be in effect for any team in the Minors and Majors division unable to field a minimum of eight (8) players by game start time. Teams will wait no longer than 10 min past the scheduled start time for players to arrive to avoid a forfeit. All games must start at the scheduled start time if a minimum of 8 players are present for each team.
8. Ground rules will be determined for each of the fields by the umpire. These rules will be explained (not negotiated) to both managers before the game.
9. Home team manager is responsible for paying the umpire and must sign the umpire's voucher and rating card after each game.
10. Each team provides a game ball to the umpire before each game.
11. All players will stay on the designated bench area during the entire game except for players batting, coaching or playing in the field. No parents or siblings will be permitted in the player bench area unless there is a medical emergency.
12. If a player must leave the game (after the game has started) for injury, illness, other activity, the player will be skipped over in the batting order and the team will not be charged with an out.
13. The 10 Run Rule will be followed for all leagues except Farms and Rookie divisions, providing the losing team has batted in the fourth inning. The team ahead by 10 runs is the winner.
14. The 10 batter per inning Rule will be followed by all divisions. An inning will end when the offensive team's 10th batter concludes their at-bat. The at-bat will be treated as if there are 2 outs in the inning. Last innings are NOT unlimited in any division for regular season games, however ARE unlimited for all playoff games.

15. An official game is determined after four (4) innings of play or 3-1/2 if the home team is winning. This does not apply to Farms.
16. No new inning can start for any game within 30 minutes of the following game's start time. This rule mostly applies to back to back Saturday games.
17. At the completion of an official game, if the score is tied, it will go in the standings as a tie. This does not apply to Farms since score is not kept for that division.
18. The winning team's manager shall be responsible for reporting game results on the website, pitcher innings on the website, and highlights to the leagues coordinator or VP.
19. The conduct and sportsmanship of the players and their spectators are the manager's responsibility. The umpire is expected to use some judgment in policing this conduct. The umpire will not allow spectators behind home plate while the game is in progress.
20. Field must be raked or groomed after each game and each practice. This is the responsibility of both teams.
21. After the regular season games are finished, playoff rounds will determine the champion for each division (other than Farms). Seeding for the playoffs will be determined by:
 - a) Win/Loss record (a tie will count higher than a loss, but not as high as a win)
 - b) Head to head competition
 - c) Total runs against
 - d) Run differential up to 10 runs.

B. EQUIPMENT

1. Each player must wear a protective helmet while batting, coaching, base running or anywhere outside of the dugout but within the fence-line such as the on-deck area. This also applies to team practices and warm-ups. The helmet must have a protective facemask attached. Coaching staffs must monitor this activity to protect the players.
2. All catchers must wear full catching equipment for games and practices. The catcher's chest protector must be worn directly under the chin and utilize the throat protector attached to the face mask. Any player warming up a pitcher must wear a helmet with a mask.
3. Eyeglass straps must be worn by any player wearing glasses during games and practices.
4. Metal cleats are NOT ALLOWED!
5. Each player must supply her own glove and all-purpose shoes (rubber cleats only).
6. All players must wear black softball pants and visors to games.
7. All bats must be marked "Official Softball" by the manufacturer, and dated 2000 or later.
8. Umpires working behind home plate MUST WEAR A FACE MASK and chest protector.
9. The double first base shall be used in all divisions.

10. All pitchers in Minors division will be required to wear a facemask and heart guard. Any pitcher pitching from a distance of 40 ft in Majors division will be required to wear a facemask and heart-guard. It is optional for pitching from 43 ft but strongly recommended.
11. Softballs - ASA certified softballs shall be used as follows:
 - a) Farms: 11 inch circ. Optic Yellow safety ball, Reduced Injury, synthetic covering
 - b) Rookie and Minors: 11 inch circ. Optic Yellow, leather covering
 - c) Majors: 12 inch circ. Optic Yellow, leather covering
 - d) Seniors: 12 inch circ. Optic Yellow, leather covering

C. PITCHING

1. Any player on the team roster may pitch. Any player chosen to pitch MUST wear a facemask and heart guard based on rule B.10. Above.
2. Bump-up players are not permitted to pitch.
3. PITCHING INNINGS: Delivery of a single pitch constitutes having pitched an inning. Any violation of these pitching limitation rules below may result in automatic forfeit of a game regardless of when the infraction is discovered.
 - a) Majors: Regular Season/Playoffs/Post-season: A pitcher is limited to a total of six (8) innings pitched in any two (2) consecutive games. 6th graders identified as “pitching candidates” shall pitch a minimum of (2) innings per game. This is for developmental purposes for continuing to build our young pitchers at this age level.
 - b) Minors: Regular Season/Playoffs/Post-season: A pitcher is limited to a total of six (8) innings pitched in any two (2) consecutive games.
4. Pitcher Conference - Time out taken to talk to a pitcher for a reason other than injury is considered a pitcher conference. If a second conference is taken in the same inning, the pitcher shall be removed as the pitcher for the remainder of the game but can play another position.
5. Only the starting pitcher may be removed and reinserted one time during the same game.
6. Not more than five (5) pitchers per team shall be used in one game, starter plus 4 changes.
7. The withdrawal of an ineligible pitcher after that pitcher is announced, but before a ball is pitched, shall not be considered a violation.
8. Softball pitching distances are:
 - a) MAJORS: 43 ft for 14U eligible players. 40 ft for 12U eligible players.
 - b) MINORS: Managers have the option of allowing their pitchers to move up to 30 ft (just inside front of circle) if both managers agree.
9. FAST PITCH: Prior to the first game of the season, the managers in the Minors division only (in conjunction with the league VP) will determine if any players will be considered “Fast Pitchers”. If so, they are limited to a maximum of two (2) innings per game. All fast-pitching must be from a 35 ft rubber.

10. If a pitcher in Majors or Minors division hits two (2) batters in the same inning or three (3) total batters in a game, the pitcher shall be removed from pitching for the remainder of the game. The batter will be awarded first base if hit by a pitch.
11. Intentional Walks are not allowed.

D. BASE RUNNING

1. Sliding is permitted in all divisions
2. **STEALING :**
 - a) A max of 3 attempted steals per team is allowed each inning.
 - b) **MAJORS DIVISION:** A double steal shall count as two steals, unless a team already has exercised two steals, in which case a multiple steal shall count as a single steal. Advancement after an error on a steal is not considered a steal. An attempted steal during a wild pitch or passed ball is still considered a steal.
 - c) **MINORS DIVISION:** stealing of 3rd base only is allowed. Stealing 2nd base or home is never allowed. There is no extra base by any runner on any overthrow made attempting to pick-off the base runner at any base (including 3rd base on a steal).
 - d) No stealing is permitted in **ROOKIES** and **FARMS** divisions.
3. **LEADING :**
 - a) **MAJORS DIVISION:** A player may only leave the base after the ball is released from the pitcher's hand. If a player leaves the base before the ball leaves the pitcher's hand and the pitch is not a hit, the runner may be played and subject to being put out. If she is not put out, she must return to her base. No other runners may advance on the play. If the pitch is a hit, the pitch doesn't count and all runners must return to base. If the player leads off a second time in the game, the player is out and the pitch doesn't count.
 - b) **MINORS DIVISION:** If a player leaves the base before the ball reaches home plate, the pitch doesn't count and the player must return to the base. If the player leads off a second time in the game, the player is out and the pitch doesn't count.
 - c) **ROOKIES** and **FARMS:** Can lead after ball crosses the plate.
4. **DROPPED THIRD STRIKE** applies to **MAJORS** division only : A third strike, if missed or dropped by the catcher, constitutes a playable and fair ball and the batter may attempt to advance to first base or more if:
 - a) Less than two (2) outs and first base is unoccupied or
 - b) Two (2) outs - the batter and all runners may attempt to advance even if first base is occupied.
5. **INFIELD FLY RULE** will apply to **MAJORS** division only.
6. Courtesy Runners should be used to minimize time between innings. A courtesy runner may be substituted for the catcher if the catcher is on base and there are two outs. The courtesy runner shall be the player who made the last batted out. The catcher must immediately begin putting on the catcher's equipment in preparation for the next inning.

7. Teams may use two (2) base coaches while at bat. Coaches may be adults or players from the team roster. Any player MUST wear a helmet while being used as a base coach.

E. DEFENSE

1. All players physically able to play, that are present at the field by game time, shall be placed in the team's batting order and shall play an equal number of defensive innings. A maximum of 1 defensive inning difference between any two players is all that is allowed. Defensive players should be rotated between infield and outfield positions if they are physically capable of safely playing those positions.
Exception: A starting pitcher may use all of her eligible innings, but only at the pitchers position.
2. No intentional collisions will be allowed. If a collision occurs and the umpire deems that it was intentional, the base runner will be called out and ejected from the game. If the umpire determines that the collision is initiated by the defender, the defender is ejected from the game and the base runner is deemed safe.
3. If a player intentionally throws a bat or helmet, the team will receive a warning. Any second offense by any player on the team will result in the ejection of the offending player having the second offense.
4. An outfielder must be positioned beyond 10ft of the base paths prior to the pitch being thrown.
5. All infielders must play their appropriate positions. There shall be no more than 6 players in the infield (P, C, 1, 2, SS, 3) at any given time.

F. HITTING

1. There is no fake bunt and swing away at any level.
2. Bunting is permitted in the MAJORS division only. (Minors Division managers are encouraged to teach their players the fundamentals of bunting, during practices.)
3. Dropped Third Strike and Infield Fly rules apply at MAJORS division only.
4. Cinderella batting and 10 batter rule applies at all levels.

G. ADDITIONAL FARMS DIVISION RULES

1. Maximum of 6 innings or 1hr 15min time limit.
2. Scores are NOT kept by either team. Scorekeeping is only for keeping track of batting order and number of outs in an inning.
3. Fielding call will be made by the 2 Managers and they must agree. Please no arguing in front of the girls or their families. Assistant coaches can be called upon for help in making a decision.

[Type text]

4. FARMS PITCHING

- a) All batters should start out with coach pitch at a distance of 30 ft (or less if necessary). Coach Pitcher can move closer to the batter at own discretion but start out by challenging the batter at 30 ft. Try to stay within the pitching circle.
- b) The Coach pitcher is limited to five (5) pitches. After 5 pitches, regardless of balls or strikes, the batting Tee must be used by the hitter.
- c) Each batter is allowed three (3) swinging strikes or five (5) total pitches each time at bat. If the batter does not get on base after three (3) swinging strikes or five (5) total pitches, the batting Tee shall be used. Please stick to this rule to keep the game moving along.
- d) At the discretion of the Manager, a girl pitcher may be used only if she has the ability or potential to throw strikes fairly consistently. A girl pitcher shall be used for a MAXIMUM of 3 pitches per batter. The Coach pitcher shall then take over and throw a maximum of 3 additional pitches before breaking out the Tee for the batter. For future batters, if the girl pitcher is unable to throw strikes then the Coach should perform all the pitching to keep the game moving along.
- e) Coach Pitcher must not make fielding plays while pitching and do their best to not interfere with the players in the field. However, Coach Pitcher is allowed to give verbal instruction to the batter during the at-bat and after the ball is hit.
- f) No walks or strikeouts are allowed.

5. FARMS HITTING

- a) All players at the game must be listed on the batting order and must bat in turn until either three (3) outs or 10 batters max per inning. If (3) outs are made prior to the 10 batter rule, then the next batter in the order (after the third out) would lead off the next inning.
- b) After (3) swinging strikes or (5) total pitches, the tee shall be set at home plate. The batting team's manager/coach must remove the tee as soon as contact with the ball is made.
- c) The batter shall not be allowed to bunt and may not take a half swing on swinging bunt. If in the manager's judgment, the batter was not taking a full swing, the batter may be called back and a strike called against the batter.
- d) Foul Ball – during Coach Pitch a foul ball is the same as conventional softball. As long as the ball is in front of home plate and within the foul lines, it will be considered a fair ball. However, when batting off a tee, if the ball does not advance at least 25 feet it will be considered a foul ball. If the defensive player touched the ball within the 25 foot arc (from home plate) before it stops, it is a playable ball.
- e) All balls hit to an infielder position where the batter reaches first base safely, shall be called a single
- f) All hard-hit balls struck cleanly to the outfield, the batter can attempt to advance

to second base for a double. This is upon coach's discretion and must be a clean hit to the outfield. For example, if a routine ball gets past an infielder, the batter must stop at first base.

- g) No triples, no home runs
- h) Please teach them NOT to throw the bat after making contact.
- i) Helmets with faceguards are required for all players or they cannot bat.

6. FARMS BASERUNNING

- a) All base-runners must wear helmets at all times.
- b) Runners must stay in contact with the base until the ball crosses the plate. After the ball crosses the plate the base-runners can take a lead. Keep in mind a base-runner can be picked off if a defensive player tags her with the ball while off the base.
- c) Runners (and batter) can only advance one base on a hit ball that stays in the infield or a routine ball that gets past an infielder.
- d) Runners (and batter) can advance a maximum of two bases on a cleanly hit ball to the outfield. However, once the ball is secured by an infielder, the base-runners (and batter) cannot advance beyond the base they are heading to next. Teaching outfielders to throw the ball to the infield cutoff can stop the base-runners from advancing.
- e) There is no advancement on over-throws. An over-throw is defined as an infielder having possession of a hit ball and throws the ball to a base and the ball goes past the receiving player. An over-throw is NOT when a ball is retrieved by an outfielder after a cleanly hit ball to the outfield and the outfielder throws the ball past an infield cutoff person. That is still considered a live ball until the batter stops at first base or second base.

7. FARMS FIELDING

- a) Defensive players should be positioned at the proper softball positions. Please do not flood the infield with 9 infielders and no outfielders. We should be teaching the girls the proper function for each position on the field. When all defensive players are in the proper position, the manager shall call "play ball" and the next batter shall take her turn.
- b) The pitcher's position must be played either to the left or right of the Coach Pitcher. Having two (2) players field the pitcher's position is NOT allowed. This takes away the balls that would get to hit shortstop or second base. We want to try to avoid the pitcher making all of the plays and keep the action going for as many defensive players as possible.
- c) Please rotate positions after every play. Switch players around in a systematic

way between batters. It allows for most to play outfield and infield in the same inning.

- d) All girls on the roster must play defense every inning. Place the extra players in the outfield (not infield) and keep them rotating. We don't want to create extra infield positions because we need to teach them to cover the proper bases without interference from extra players.
- e) Each team must field a catcher in full gear for each inning. Catchers should be rotated each inning at this age level to give everyone a chance that is interested. A coach should stand behind the catcher to catch and retrieve balls that go beyond the catcher in an effort to speed up the game. The coaches should also pay close attention to the catcher's positioning with respect to the batter to ensure the catcher remains a safe distance from the swinging bat.

8. FARMS COACHING

- a) Managers and coaches may stand near their batter to give advice, but must not interfere with play.
- b) Managers and coaches can join their defensive players and instruct them during the game. Manager or coach must request "time" from the opposing manager before he attempts to demonstrate a technique or explain a play to his players during the progress of the game.
- c) Coaches should do their best to keep the games fun and interesting for the players and families. Keep the games moving along with as little down time as possible.

H. ADDITIONAL ROOKIES DIVISION RULES

- 1. Maximum of 6 innings or 1hr 30 min time limit.
- 2. Scores can be kept by both teams if both managers agree.
- 3. Fielding call will be made by the 2 Managers and they must agree. Please no arguing in front of the girls or their families. Assistant coaches can be called upon for help in making a decision.

4. ROOKIES PITCHING

- a) All batters should start out with player pitch when applicable. If your team has players that are in pitching lessons or just want to try pitching, it is encouraged to give them an opportunity to pitch. The pitching distance can be closer than the 35 ft pitching plate if need be, however, must be a safe distance from the batter. If deemed that there are no players interested in pitching on the team, then Coach pitch will be used.
- b) Player pitcher is limited to 4 balls (a walk) or 3 strikes when the 3rd strike is called looking. In the case of strike three (3) being a swinging strike, the batter is out and pitcher can continue to pitch to the next batter. In the case of strike three (3)

being looking, the Coach should step in and pitch to the batter while maintaining the count of balls and strikes previously incurred by the player pitcher. No walks are allowed.

- a) Player pitcher throws 4 balls = Coach pitcher comes in and throws until batter either swings and misses 3 times or hits the ball in play.
- b) Player pitcher throws 4 balls and 1 strike = Coach pitcher comes in and throws until batter either swings and misses 2 times or hits the ball in play.
- c) Player pitcher throws 4 balls and 2 strikes = Coach pitcher comes in and throws until batter either swings and misses 1 time or hits the ball in play.
- c) After the strike 3 (if swinging), it will be up to the Managers to use the batting tee based on the skill level of the individual player at bat. We want to ensure a positive batting experience for each player.
- d) At the discretion of the Manager, a girl pitcher may be used only if she has the ability or potential to throw strikes fairly consistently. A girl pitcher shall be used for each batter until the 4th ball is thrown then must be replaced by a coach pitcher to complete that at-bat to keep the game moving.
- e) Coach Pitcher must not make fielding plays while pitching and do their best to not interfere with the players in the field. However, Coach Pitcher is allowed to give verbal instruction to the batter during the at-bat and after the ball is hit.
- f) No walks are allowed. Strikeouts are only allowed when 3rd strike is swinging against a player pitcher (not a coach).

5. ROOKIES HITTING

- a) All players at game must be listed on the batting order and must bat in turn until either three (3) outs or 10 batters max per inning. If (3) outs are made prior to the 10 batter rule, then the next batter in the order (after the third out) would lead off the next inning.
- b) Batting tee should not be used in Rookies Division. If a manager has a specific concern regarding an individual player, this will need to be discussed with and approved by the V.P. of Softball. The idea is to drive consistency throughout the division.
- c) The batter shall not be allowed to bunt and may not take a half swing on swinging bunt. If in the manager's judgment, the batter was not taking a full swing, the batter may be called back and a strike called against the batter.
- d) Foul Ball – during Coach Pitch a foul ball is the same as conventional softball. As long as the ball is in front of home plate and within the foul lines, it will be considered a fair ball.
- e) All balls hit to an infielder position where the batter reaches first base safely, shall be called a single
- f) All hard-hit balls struck cleanly to the outfield, the batter can attempt to advance to the next base(s).

- g) Play stops when ball is in the possession of an infielder.
- h) Please teach them NOT to throw the bat after making contact.
- i) Helmets with faceguards are required for all players or they cannot bat.

6. ROOKIES BASERUNNING

- a) All base-runners must wear helmets at all times.
- b) Runners must stay in contact with the base until the ball crosses the plate. After the ball crosses the plate the base-runners can take a lead. Keep in mind a base-runner can be picked off if a defensive player tags her with the ball while off the base.
- c) Runners (and batter) can only advance one base on a hit ball that stays in the infield.
- d) Runners (and batter) can advance additional bases on a cleanly hit ball to the outfield. However, once the ball is secured by an infielder, the base-runners (and batter) cannot advance beyond the base they are heading to next. Teaching outfielders to throw the ball to the infield cutoff can stop the base-runners from advancing.
- e) There is no advancement on over-throws. An over-throw is defined as an infielder having possession of a hit ball and throws the ball to a base and the ball goes past the receiving player. An over-throw is NOT when a ball is retrieved by an outfielder after a cleanly hit ball to the outfield and the outfielder throws the ball past an infield cutoff person. That is still considered a live ball until the batter stops at first base or second base.

7. ROOKIES FIELDING

- a) Defensive players should be positioned at the proper softball positions. Please do not flood the infield with 9 infielders and no outfielders. We should be teaching the girls the proper function for each position on the field. When all defensive players are in the proper position, the manager shall call "play ball" and the next batter shall take her turn.
- b) The pitcher's position must be played either to the left or right of the Coach Pitcher. Having two (2) players field the pitcher's position is NOT allowed. This takes away the balls that would get to hit shortstop or second base. We want to try to avoid the pitcher making all of the plays and keep the action going for as many defensive players as possible.
- c) Please switch players around in a systematic way between batters or at least between innings. It allows for most to play outfield and infield the same amount of time.

- d) All girls on the roster must play defense every inning. Place the extra players in the outfield (not infield) and keep them rotating. We don't want to create extra infield positions because we need to teach them to cover the proper bases without interference from extra players.
- e) Each team must field a catcher in full gear for each inning. Catchers should be rotated each inning at this age level to give everyone a chance that is interested. A coach should stand behind the catcher to catch and retrieve balls that go beyond the catcher in an effort to speed up the game. The coaches should also pay close attention to the catcher's positioning with respect to the batter to ensure the catcher remains a safe distance from the swinging bat.

8. ROOKIES COACHING

- a) Managers and coaches may stand near their batter to give advice, but must not interfere with play.
- b) Managers and coaches can join their defensive players and instruct them during the game. Manager or coach must request "time" from the opposing manager before he attempts to demonstrate a technique or explain a play to his players during the progress of the game.
- c) Coaches should do their best to keep the games fun and interesting for the players and families. Keep the games moving along with as little down time as possible.